Ahmedabad/Bombay for snag rectification of radio equipment yearly servicing/certification; it also went to Jabalpur against payment and also for Con-Training.

(f) The Aircraft has not been misused.

Refunds for Cancelled Tickets

1083. SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the problems faced by the commuters in getting the refunds after cancellation of tickets (Reservation) purchased from the Computer Reservation Centres in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons for the delay in getting refunds;

(c) whether the Government propose to modify the system in this regard;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the total number of persons who returned reservation tickets and got the refund during the last six months and the number of persons still waiting for refund; and

(f) the steps proposed to be taken by the Govt. to refund the amount within a week?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b). No such problems have come to notice. Under the existing Rules, refund on cancelled tickets is granted at the computerised Reservation counter itself till the printing of charts of the relevant train, and upto 6 hours after the departure of the train at the station. In cases where refund is not admissible at the station, the ticket is deposited at the station and ticket deposit receipt issued to the passenger. Refund is granted by the CCS (Refund) of the ticket issuing Railway based on the merits of each case.

(c) and (d). The existing procedure is working satisfactorily and there is no proposal to modify these rules.

(e) The total number of cases received for refund on all zonal railways from July '91 to Dec. '91 were 1,46,075. Out of them, refund has already been granted in 1,32,022 cases and 14,053 cases were pending as on 31.12.1991.

(f) Refund is granted on the spot in respect of the tickets cancelled at the Reservation Counter before printing of the charts and upto 6 hours after the departure of the train at the station. In other cases, refund is normally granted within 16 days provided timely request accompanied with relevant documents is received.

[*Translation*]

Primary Education for Children

1084. SHRI BARE LAL JATAV: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UNICEF in its Report for the 1992 has pointed to the fact that even the primary education is not being imparted to a major section of children's in our country; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) In its Report titled 'The State of the World' Children 1992' the UNICEF document mentions that in India approximately half of the nation's children fail to finish primary school.

(b) Government is aware that the retention in primary schools is unsatisfactory. According to latest available statistics relating to 1987-88, retention rate at the primary stage is 53.03%.

The National Policy on Education, 1986,

lays emphasis upon improving retention and suggests measures in this regard. Some of the main measures being taken are:-

i) Provision of Central Assistance under the scheme of Operation Blackboard for improvement of physical facilities in Primary schools;

ii) provision of Central Assistance for establishment of District Institutes of Education and Training for improving teacher effectiveness;

iii) provision of incentives to socio-economically backward children for free uniform, free textbooks, attendance scholarship for girls and provision of mid-day meals;

iv) recruitment of women teachers in larger numbers to improve retention of girls;

v) laying down of Minimum Levels of Learning for the primary stage and setting up a procedure for improving the teaching-learning process and making it more activity based and child centred.

[*English*]

Export of Sugar

1085. SHRI DHARAMPAL SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether the price of sugar has increased in the International market; and

(b) if so, the quantity of sugar permitted to be exported by the Government during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI): (a) The price of sugar in the international market keeps on fluctuating.

(b) The quantity of sugar allocated for export during the last 3 sugar years (October to September) is given below:–

(Lakh tonnes)

Year	*Quantity permitted*
1888-89	0. 33
1989-90	0.51
1990-91	5.61

Procurement Price of Wheat, Rice and Sugar

1086. SHRI BHAGEY GOBARDHAN: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times procurement price of wheat, rice and sugar has been increased during the last two years;

(b) the factors leading to such increase each time;

(c) whether procurement of wheat, rice and sugar in the last season had been satisfactory; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI): (a) Twice, Sir.

(b) The minimum support price of wheat and paddy is fixed on the basis of recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) which takes into account cost of cultivation, inputs and reasonable return to farmers etc. The procurement prices of levy rice are determined each year on the basis of M.S.P. of paddy, statutory taxes payable by millers/dealers, etc.

Ex-factory prices of levy sugar are fixed for each sugar year as per formula recommended by expert bodies like B.I.C.P.